

When Cupid Delayed Dinner

By BESSIE R. HOOVER.

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It was 8 o'clock on a raw morning in early summer, and the teams that were to take them to the lake had not yet arrived.

There were but two men in this chilled company on the church steps, for the superintendent and several of the teachers could not leave their work. The Rev. Albert Pashley was one of the faithful; the other was Ike, the son of Deacon Clutner, a rich dairyman. Ike was allowed a substitute on this momentous day, and, while a hiring stopped milk into the motley dishes of the customers, Ike abandoned himself to the varied pleasures of the Sunday school picnic.

Ike Clutner was a stoop shouldered, amiable fellow with no particular features. He looked singularly out of place in his best clothes minus his milk can and measure.

The first wagon rattled up after an hour of wintry waiting. There had been some mistake about the time—there always is. The Rev. Albert Pashley clambered into the wagon as a matter of course. Phyllis Jones, who had walked in from the country, was al-



"Aw, thunder!" grumbled Ike, ready in the wagon when Ike Clutner, brushing aside the squirming children, forcibly took his seat beside her. Ike did not mean to leave his courting to chance, for holidays were scarce with him. But Mrs. Pashley, the minister's wife, who was going to wait for the last wagon, cried:

"We'll need a man in our crowd. Ike, you stay and go with us."

"Aw, thunder!" grumbled Ike under his breath and climbed disconsolately out, and the first load rumbled away.

The second wagon came in half an hour. Ike, fearing that he might be left out entirely if the minister's wife happened to think of any reason for his staying behind, plumped himself down by the driver's side and left the mothers and children to scramble in as best they could.

"Which way?" questioned the driver when they were within a mile of the lake. "Are you going to Coggin's gap or to Feather's?"

This caused consternation among the mothers, who all knew that they were going to the "gap," but did not know which one.

"Coggin's," volunteered Ike, with the intuition of a lover.

"Feather's gap," corrected the minister's wife. "I remember now. It's Feather's."

"Aw, thunder!" muttered Ike gloomily to himself.

When the heavily freighted wagon rolled protestingly into the deep beach and Feather's gap lay wrapped in utter solitude but for the intruding team. The low lying dunes were as guiltless of a footprint as if man had never passed that way. The other wagon had not come to Feather's gap.

"I knew all the time that it was either Feather's or Coggin's," said Mrs. Blush, president of the Ladies' Aid. "Now, driver, take us round to Coggin's."

The driver grudgingly turned his horses, growling about "fool women," when the minister's wife spoke out sharply, "And remember we don't pay you anything extra for this blunder."

"Whoa!" shouted the driver. "Pile out!"

"Pile out!" echoed Mrs. Pashley in a scandalized voice. "We will not! You should have found out where we were going before you started. Drive on immediately."

"It'll be a dollar more," announced the man, with gloomy unconcern.

"It will not be a dollar more," declared Mrs. Pashley angrily. "Climb out, everybody. I shall speak of this to Mr. Pashley."

The picnicers poured quickly into the lake sand. Then the dinner for the whole crowd was clawed from un-

der the driver's seat and dumped in a little pyramid on the ground. The team started off, the man muttering.

The children ran shrieking to the lake. The mothers carried the dinner and placed it in the shade of the willows. But a cry of black ants was raised, and, as the women were already exhausted from wading in the deep sand, Mrs. Pashley ordered Ike to transfer the dinner to a place of safety, as if he were the state militia.

"Take the dinner out by the lake—not too near the water," directed Mrs. Pashley, who was going about with a pained, consecrated face as if they had just been shipwrecked on a desert island.

For Ike the forenoon passed gloomily away, but he put in a good day's work waiting on the women.

As dinner time approached they began to expect the other picnicers to look them up, but no one came, so Mrs. Pashley sent Ike to Coggin's gap to ask the minister and his crowd to come to Feather's gap to eat, as that would save carrying the dinner a mile.

Ike struck out through the woods that skirted the bluffs above the sand dunes. When he had gone about half the distance he met Phyllis Jones.

"Hello!" he shouted.

"Where have you been?" cried Phyllis.

"Feather's gap."

Though Phyllis had a good disposition and a great capacity for work, nature had not seen fit to bless her with much chin, but she had an honest freckled face, and Ike considered her perfection.

"We supposed you folks had gone to the wrong gap," explained Phyllis, "so the minister told me to go over and tell Mrs. Pashley that, as she had the dinner, we'd all come over to Feather's gap to eat—or if she'd rather come."

"Mrs. Pashley'd rather eat where she is, so that's settled," answered Ike easily. Then he proceeded to forget the other picnicers entirely.

"Lookie," he cried, producing a dingy candy heart bearing in bold red letters the suggestive motto, "Be My Honey."

"I mean worse'n that," hinted Ike darkly, slipping the heart into her hand, immediately presenting her with another saccharine sentiment, "Yours For Eternity."

After reading this solemn promise Phyllis fished out a candy heart from her own pocket, which as a thrifty and farsighted young woman she may have secreted for this very emergency, and gave it to Ike, who read with great satisfaction, "I Am Yours."

"When?" he asked briefly.

"Not till after butcherin' time," answered Phyllis promptly and firmly.

"Aw, thunder—stop!" cried Ike, greatly displeased. "Talk sense."

"You don't want me very bad if you can't wait till I'm ready. Pete Jenner'd wait till doomsday."

"I'll wait till next grass—if you say so," vowed the distressed dairyman recklessly.

"No, Ike. Butcherin' time's long enough. I'll be ready by then."

"Lookie," cried Ike, "here's a path that leads to the lake. Let's go down."

Following this path, they found a little cove sheltered from the world by high clay ridges that shut them completely from view of either gap. Here they sat hand in hand watching the waves and, growing hungry, lunched on a whole bag of amorous worded sweets that Ike produced from a bulging pocket.

"Maybe we ought to look the others up," suggested Phyllis after a long season of blissful munching.

"Aw, thunder—no!" objected Ike.

"There might be something to do-somewhere," she added vaguely.

"I done it all," Ike assured her.

In the meantime the minister's wife and her satellites waited impatiently for Ike and the other picnicers.

"Let's feed these children and eat ourselves," suggested Mrs. Jenner.

"No," said Mrs. Pashley emphatically. "The others might not like it."

"Mrs. Peters would have a fit if we eat without her," declared Mrs. Blush.

"Let's all go over to Coggin's gap and then send Ike and Brother Pashley back here for the dinner."

"No. If we go, we'll take the dinner with us," said Mrs. Pashley. "Albert's chest isn't strong."

"It's a long walk to tug all these victuals," sighed Mrs. Blush.

"But I guess it's the only thing to do," replied Mrs. Pashley. "Mrs. Jenner, you get the children together and we'll go."

They went through the woods, as Ike had gone, for that was the shortest way.

At last they filed thankfully down the crooked path into Coggin's gap. But the Rev. Mr. Pashley and his half of the crowd were not there.

"Where's Ike?" burst out Mrs. Blush as she sat cumbrously down on the sand to rest in the shade of an ant covered willow.

"And where's Brother Pashley and the rest gone to?" exclaimed Mrs. Jenner.

"Well, they've gone," declared Mrs. Jenner, "and we can't help it. So we'd just better unjack these victuals double quick."

"No, no; it won't do at all!" cried Mrs. Pashley sharply as several women, anxious to feed the clamoring children, fussed over the baskets.

"Put those covers on again," commanded the minister's wife. "Mr. Pashley and the others will probably come in a few minutes."

But nobody appeared, and they began to think that the crowd must have gone to Feather's gap by the wagon road or the beach and that they had missed them.

It was long past dinner time and the shadows were beginning to lengthen when the woebegone party, still ably

commanded by the minister's wife, retraced their steps to Feather's gap.

But not a vestige of the other party or Ike was to be found there.

"Now, if you'll take my advice, Mrs. Pashley, we'll eat a snack," urged Mrs. Jenner as they dumped the dinner in the sand at Feather's gap.

"We'll do no such thing," retorted the minister's wife. "I shan't have it said that I meddled with the dinner."

The children, too tired and hungry to play, dropped languidly on the warm sand or tried to drown their sorrows in copious drafts of warm lake water.

"I'm going home," said Mrs. Jenner firmly, after another bitter season of fruitless waiting. "I shall take the infant class and my five and go. The rest of you can do what you please."

She would have opened her own basket and fed the children, but it contained only sour pickles and cabbage salad, and she dared not thrust such food on the empty stomachs of the infant class, not to mention her own five.

"I thought we'd have a man to help us," fretted the minister's wife, "but, no; I send Ike on an errand, and that's the last of him."

"I should think that Brother Pashley would do something," observed Mrs. Jenner.

Mrs. Pashley let this remark pass in silence. "We will all go home now," she announced in a tired voice. "That's all we can do. Each one carry something." And again they were marshaled along, but this time it was toward home.

They had planned to walk back, for the Sunday school could not afford to ride both ways. Drearly they snailed along. A mile passed by, and its weary length seemed stretched to half a dozen.

As these picnic toilers rounded a bend in the road that now led through treeless, open fields they beheld as in a vision a dispirited company halted by the dusty roadside for a rest in the hot sun.

It was the Rev. Albert Pashley, the formidable Mrs. Peters, several other matrons and a dozen or more glum children, all sitting dejectedly on the grass dangling their tired feet in a dry ditch.

The Rev. Albert arose as spokesman for this disgruntled assembly. "Where have you been?" he inquired ungraciously of his wife, as if she and her crowd were the offending ones.

"Looking and waiting for you—all day long," replied Mrs. Pashley coldly.

"Where's Phyllis Jones?" asked Mrs. Peters, coming forward. "We sent her to tell you that we'd come to Feather's gap and eat dinner with you, but she didn't come back. So we went over there, but you was gone. Then we went back to Coggin's again, and finally we started home."

"We ain't none of us saw Phyllis," returned Mrs. Jenner. "But where's Ike Clutner?"

"None of us has seen him," answered the minister.

"The only thing to do now is jest to unpack these victuals double quick," began Mrs. Jenner.

"Land sakes!" broke in Mrs. Peters shrilly. "Ain't you folks et yet?"

"No, ma'am," answered Mrs. Blush icily.

"Well, of all fool things!" commented Mrs. Peters. "Totin' all that truck all day long and not eatin' your share!"

"I'm surprised, Mrs. Pashley," said



ORDERED THE FOOD DUMPED ON THE GROUND.

the minister, "that you didn't take the initiative here. At least you could have fed these little ones!"

"That's what I said all the time," interrupted Mrs. Jenner.

"It has been ten hours since I myself ate," he concluded solemnly, referring to his watch.

"Why, I thought—it would be nicer to eat together," began Mrs. Pashley, but nobody seemed to hear her.

For Mrs. Peters ordered all the food dumped on the ground by the roadside. The ravenous children squatted quickly before the delayed dinner. The older people lowered themselves to the ground awkwardly, but gratefully. Then the Rev. Albert asked the shortest picnic blessing on record, and the meal began by the dusty roadside.

At last around a bend in the road, hand in hand, came Ike and Phyllis. Ike's pockets were bulging with stones and his face wore a satisfied grin. Phyllis showed a nervous tendency to

giggle.

"You're great folks!" cried Mrs. Peters. "Where've you been?"

"Back apiece," replied Ike boldly.

"We sort of lost track of time," confessed Phyllis guiltily.

"We've most of us been there ourselves," the Rev. Albert remarked genially, with an added unctious in his voice in view of the possible wedding fee.

"Aw, thunder!" grunted the red faced Ike, who didn't know what else to say.

She Acquiesced.

The wife of one of the directors of the line was a passenger. She was an imperious woman, accustomed to having her own way, and when the ship began to roll she sent forthwith for the captain. A steward came instead. She scorned the steward and demanded the captain's presence immediately. The purser was the next sacrifice and after he, the third officer and the first officer had all retired discomfited, with a flea in the ear, as the saying is, the captain came. By this time the rolling had increased, and the lady's voice was beginning to sound far away.

"I wish you to stop this rolling at once," she said to the captain.

"Madam," said the captain, "a ship, as you know, is feminine, and if she wants to roll I fear that I can no more stop her than I could help coming here when you wished to see me."

It was a naive bit of flattery directed at her weakest point, and, despite the green tinge of her complexion that foretold an immediate attack of mal de mer, the woman smiled.

"Very well, sir," she faintly murmured, closing her eyes. "Let—let her roll."—New York Sun.

FALL FROM GREAT HEIGHTS.

The Sensation Described by One Who Experienced It.

A German scientist, Professor Albert Heim, who fell over a precipice in the Alps, but lived to tell the tale, makes that story a very encouraging account to those with an inclination to high jumps and the like.

His fall was only seventy feet, yet that would be more than enough to satisfy a temperate person. His story is full of interesting detail.

At first he seemed to himself to be flying through the air. His fall really could have occupied only a few seconds, but his train of thought was long and full of interesting details.

"I clearly saw," he says, "the possibility of my fate. I said to myself, 'The rocky wall from which I am now being hurled prevents my seeing what is at its base. The snow may be melted there or there may be none. If there is any, my life may be saved. Otherwise death is inevitable.'"

"If I am conscious on reaching the earth, I have by me a bottle of aromatics and my alpenstock. I will grasp it, for it may serve me in good stead." I thought, too, of removing my eyeglasses lest their splintering might cause injury.

"Other and gentler thoughts for those I was to leave behind came upon me. For myself I felt indifferent, caring really little whether I should be much injured or not, but from motives of consideration for others I felt impelled, as it were, to make light of the matter. I seemed to call aloud, 'I am not much hurt!'

"I recollected that in five days more I was to have delivered an inaugural discourse and thought of the grief my death would cause to those near and dear to me. Anon, lying, as it were, on the limit of a far distant horizon, appeared distinct and divers images and episodes of my past life. The whole mental picture stood out clear cut and illumined by divine and mysterious light.

"All things seemed lovely and of good report. There were no misgivings, no anxieties, no sorrow, pain or terror.

"There were no sensations of contest or strife. All was merged in feelings of genial good will and kindly feeling. Such feelings predominated over all and formed what was truly a unique and lovely picture.

"Gradually a heaven of glorious blue flecked with crimson clouds of gossamer lightness surrounded me. In them I was wafted to and fro, borne up from below, but painlessly and pleasantly, while a vast and moving snow field seemed to accompany me. Anon the perception of objects, subjective thoughts, a medley of various feelings, seemed to circle in concentric mazes around as a common center.

"Then came a dull thud, which I heard very distinctly, but did not feel, and my fall was ended. At that instant a dark veil passed before me.

"I called aloud three or four times 'I am not much hurt,' grasped my glasses, which lay near me, and touched my limbs to make sure they were not broken.

"Then I saw my companions slowly approaching. They told me a good half hour had elapsed since my fall before I spoke.

"I had lost consciousness, and that explains the dark veil. Later the power of thinking returned. I was conscious only so long as I was falling of the perception of beautiful images. At the moment of contact with earth they disappeared."

On another occasion Dr. Heim was injured in a carriage accident. He said that he distinctly heard and counted the bone fractures—seven in all—which he received. He quotes the evidence of an Italian who had a similar experience.—Gateway.

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